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back on the weekly trips to get it. I never was afraid, except when making the return trip. On the way home at every turn in the road, I expected to meet an army of Yankees. Eight of the eleven miles was dense timberland, and looking back on it now, I believe I was a pretty good soldier myself, for those miles seemed long ones to a child making the trip alone, even though I usually went and came in a sweeping gallop. On one of these trips my sister Fannie, about twenty years of age, later Mrs. James D. Kerr, made the trip. After leaving, several regiments of Union soldiers came by on their way to Hightown, and my mother knew that my sister would have to meet them on her way back. The hour came for her return, sundown and dark, and still she had not returned. It was a long, anxious night, and we, children that we were, at least partly realized the hours of anxious suspense that my mother was going through. At daybreak she returned. She had met the Yankee soldiers about three o'clock in the afternoon, six miles from home, at Laurel Fork. A ruffian soldier ordered her off her horse, but the officer in command (think it was Col. Geo. Washington Hull, from McDowell, Virginia) stepped forward saying, "No, Lady, stay on your horse. You shall not be harmed but we shall have to delay your return home until morning. We mean to camp near here tonight and no word must be carried back." At sundown the officer sent a guard with her to Daniel Wilfong's, three miles from home, he himself standing guard outside all night to make sure no word was sent to Confederate soldiers. At daybreak, he rejoined

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his regiment, Fannie being given permission to return home.

Union soldiers sometimes made camp at Camp Bartow. After dark quite frequently mother would take one of us out where we could see down to Camp Bartow to see if any camp fires were lighted. If so, we knew they would pass our house about eight o'clock the next morning. We would then drive the stock over to Sugar Camp Ridge, so the Yankees would not take them as they went by, brother Brown Yeager and Henry Wilfong guarding them in the mountains. Sugar cakes, syrup, meats and other provisions would be buried also. Years later jugs of syrup were found and dug up.

Mother and Fannie knitted socks for Will and Henry while in the army. Yankees were often passing through, and at one of these times we had quite a scramble in the pantry. Mother and I entered in time to see a Yankee trying to make his escape through the window with his arms full of provisions and the prized knitted socks, with Fannie clinging frantically to the socks, determined he should not have them. Those watching from outside laughed at their comrade's predicament, trying to retain the socks as well as the provisions, and yet not lose his balance on the high narrow window. Fannie was victorious in the struggle for possession of the socks.

Cousin Mag Arbogast, later Campbell, and I were visiting Aunt Matilda Nottingham who lived near Boyer. As in every war comedy and tragedy go side by side, and pranks played could easily have been turned into tragedy. We were about thirteen years old at this time. We dressed in uniform, put

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a gun over our shoulder, and went out on the hill where we knew Dave and Jim Kerr, who were not old enough to go to the army, could see us. They spied us and, thinking we were suspicious characters, possibly Yankee spies, shouldered their guns also and started our way. We began to saunter in the direction of the house, but it was not long before we heard them cry, "Halt," which we knew to do immediately. Only a short time before one of the pickets had cried, "Halt" to Jack Slayton. Not being quite normal mentally, he became frightened and did not obey the command. I can imagine I see them carrying him by our house now.

When the heavy fighting and cannonading was being done in Richmond and other points in Virginia, we would lie flat on the ground and listen to the rumble of the cannon. Anxiously we would wait for mail to hear if our boys were in those battles and were safe.

At the close of the Civil War, Henry Arbogast Yeager was held as a prisoner-of-war at Point Lookout, Maryland, and was released, after taking the oath of allegiance to the United States, on June 17, 1865. The prisoners were released alphabetically, and Henry Yeager realized too late to be released under "J", as the original spelling of Yeager was with a "J", and he began calling himself "Reager" instead of Yeager. When he was finally released it was under "R" as Henry A. Reager but he took good care to sign it "Henty A. Yeager". This is true, as the photostat copy on file in Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va., original on file in War Dept., Washington, D. C., plainly shows. Their system was not as ironclad then as now.

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Chapter 7
CIVIL WAR

Captain J. W. Mathews served in the war between the states. He had always expressed a desire to be buried in a Confederate Uniform and according to his wish his body was drawn to the grave in a two-horse wagon. He was born in Pocahontas County in 1839 and at the age of 21 he enlisted as a private in Co. 125th Virginia Infantry and saw service in many of the historic battles of the Civil War. He was one of the so-called prisoner of war in Charleston S. C. been placed with a number of others, about 600 between the Federal defense and the attacking Confederates, and being exposed to the firing of this attacking army. Fortunately the danger of the prisoners was discovered in time to avert any casualties. He died in Greenbrier County in 1930.

Wednesday Oct. 10, 1934 Mathew John McNeel celebrated this nineteenth birthday at the old McNeel homestead where there has a John McNeel resided since 1768. At the age of seventeen he entered the Civil War and saw arduous and honorable service. He is the last remaining member of Captain W. L. Mcneels' Company of soldiers. -----Pocahontas Times

No where in the mountains were the Confederate States more solidly supported then in the Greenbank community in fact there was hardly a Union man found in the whole community. The first year of the war 1861, Confederate Veterans Company "G" of the Virginia 31st Regiment mustered in the service 53 all volunteers. In the second year of the war company G had 120 soldiers, all six feet tall except James Hughes and Robert Wolfenbarger, practically all from the Greenbank District. Company G. was of the famous 31st Regiment of the 4th Brigade of Stonewall Jacksons Corps and Army under the command of Robert E. Lee. The Union soldiers admitted that they could always tell when they had to confront the 31st Regiment of Stonewall's Brigade, due to the fact that the impace was always stubborn and irresistible.

It will be remembered that the main battle of Braxton was fought on Oct. 3, 1861 and that the Confederate army fell back to the Top Allegheny, and went to building cabins for the winter, and fortifying and building batteries.

The idea of the Confederates in moving to the Top Allegheny was to prevent an army from marching in behind them by the way of the North Fork road, and the Greenbank Mountain road. Pickets were placed down the Greenbank road, and on the North Fork road. The pickets on the North Fork road decided to blockade it, to be sure that the enemy could not get in the rear, and company G was on the detail to pilot a company of soldiers down on the North Fork with the instructions to blockade it in such a tangle that it would take a year or more to cut it out. The soldiers cut down the mannoth hemlock across the road for about four miles. The soldiers said that it was the largest blockade in the war. After the war it took the road hands about two years to cut it out of the road, and each man working about four days. The Greenbank mountain road was also blockaded.

It was in the engagement on Top Allegheny that the old Confederates soldiers, William Slayton was wounded and crept off in the bush to die, but was found two days later by his comrades who were searching for missing soldiers. Their attention was attracted to the place of some one singing a good old hymn. When found, they were told he though he would sing a hymn before he died, but he recovered and lived many years.

It will be remembered that the home of John Yeager was in the center of the battle field. We have it from Mrs. Rachel Sutton, who at that time was staying with her uncle, John Yeager and Mr. J. D. Beard, a daughter of John Yeager, that they were awakened in the morning before daylight by the loud talking of the soldiers. They were getting ready for battle, and were filling the breastworks just back of the Yeager house. When the bullets began falling on the house like hail.

The Confederate General ordered the inmates to vacate the house, the Yeager family moved out. When they came back, after the battle, they found the house riddled with bullets, one corner was badly damaged by a cannon ball and house was filled with wounded soldiers. The upstairs was used for a hospital for many days, and many of the soldiers died in the house.

The retreat of the Union forces after the battle was known as "Slaytons Retreat" and led to the composition of the old violin tune of the same name, which was composed by two Confederates soldiers, George B. Sutton and Robert Wolfenbarger, who said they heard him trying to give the command to retreat, but couldn't say anything for stammering. It was reported afterwards, that the delay of the Union army, and failing to make the attack in the rear at the proper time was due to the fact that they found a barrel or two of good cider at the Nottingham home and wouldn't march a step until it was all consumed and their canteens filled. The unreasonable thing about the official reports of the battle of Top Allegheny is that perhaps 2000 soldiers on each side would stand and shoot at each other from daylight until 2:30 and only 20 killed on each side. But it will be remembered that the boys of the Blue and the Gray" who fought were amateurs in the art of warfare, and had not yet been drilled, and had not learned the military tactics of Jackson, Lee, and Grant. The shooting must have been at random, for the lumber company who cut the timber in that section found a number of trees half cut down by the cannon balls, these trees were said to be entirely out of the line of battle.

From: Pocahontas Times
from a history of Greenbank
written in 1934 by R. W. Brown
of Greenbank and pub. in the
times.

The experience of a soldier at the battle of Droop Mountain in 1863. A foot soldier marching through to take his stand at Droop Mountain passed near his home and his folks presented him with a fine boiled ham, which he placed in a knapsack and carried some twenty odd miles on a forced march to the battlefield where he had a few hours rest and was than envolved in the battle. The Confederates retreated and marched until late at night when they called a halt just outside of Lewisburg. This soldier in 24 hours had walked over 50 miles and had fought a battle. Being ready for refreshments, he looked for his ham and found that there was nothing but a rock. Just before the battle, while he was taking a nap, some comrade had stolen his ham and replaced it with a rock weighing bout the same number of pounds. It was this stone he had been defending against onslaught and which he had carried all these weary miles.

Pocahontas Times.

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William Young Sr. of Stony Creek who had neighbors fighting on both sides. Also many relatives and friends, attempted strict neutrality. For this he was made a victim of local animosities. He had some skill as a physician, and it became customary for the neighbors to call for his help during the dreadful epidemic of diptheria and other camp diseases which swept the county during the war. It was while answering a call of mercy to a family living on Sevego that he was met at the Griffin place by a party of Confederate sympathizers and soldiers and put under arrest. He was first confined in the jail at Huntersville, thence conveyed favor, kinsman, the late Levi Gay, a Confederate soldier, was allowed to take him to Highland. Mr Young sickened and died during that same year in Libby Prison in Richmond. His end was no doubt hastened by worry and grief over unjust imprisonment, as much as by necessary hardship endured by a prisoner of war, removed from the free environment of his beloved mountain country. He was by principle anti-slavery, and therefore classed as pro-federal.

Pocahontas Times
Aug. 8, 1918. Norman Price.

CIVIL WAR ACTIVITIES IN POCAHONTAS

Terminating in Battle at White Sulphur

On August 21, 1863 Averill started to Huntersville and halted his main command at Frost, while some of his command drove the Confederates down Knapps Creek until they reached the Northwest passage between Huntersville and Minnehaha Springs. Here the Confederates took a stand in the canyon. Averill hearing about it at Frost, on the 22nd sent Gibson's Battalion down Knapps Creek to make it appear that it led the army. Then Averill with his main army crossed over into the Hills through the Shrader settlement. By this road Averill rode into the deserted village of Huntersville in the rear of the Confederates. A squadron of cavalry under Col. Ohley was sent to learn the whereabouts of the Confederates and found them retreating towards Warm Springs. They were overtaken and there was continual skirmishing until the Confederates were driven through the Ryder Gap into Virginia.

Camp Northwest near Huntersville was the first elaborate camp to be built in the Civil War. It was located on the White farm, and there were substantial log buildings, much equipment, and a lot of supplies there. The camp was burned on August 22, 1863. The commissary buildings, stores, cabins, blacksmith shop, wagons, rifles, and so forth were destroyed and a lot of plunder carried away. All the wheat and flour in the mill opposite J. A. Reed's house was also destroyed. That night the Federals camped at Huntersville and waited for two regiments that were marching to join them by way of Beverly and Marlinton. On the 25th Averill marched to Warm Springs and Col. Jackson and Gen. Jones retreated before him to Millboro. Averill rested that night and having cleared Pocahontas of the Confederate army, decided to do the same for Greenbrier County. He therefore turned south and marched into Greenbrier.

To keep Pocahontas County clear of Confederates he sent back the 10th W. Va. to Camp at Marlins Bottom. It was the regiment of General Thomas M. Harris. It was his command that fired the last shot at Appomattox. After the war he served on the commission that tried the assassins of President Lincoln.

At the time he was in camp at Marlins Bottom, he has with him his twelve year old son, who has a horse of his own and who rode as the mascot of the "Tenth Legion". This twelve year old boy is none other than Hon. John T. Harris, the state clerk of the West Virginia senate and the most popular man in West Virginia.

From, West Virginia
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Juanita S. Dilley 2/24/40
Pocahontas Co.
Chapter 4, Section 4b-3

BATTLE CHEAT MOUNTAIN

September 13, 1861

The fortifications at Valley and Middle mountains were made because of a report by William Skeen, a lawyer at Huntersville, who furnished them with a map, and who pointed out that the railroad at Millboro was exposed to attack as well as the railroad at Staunton and that it was not as many miles distant by turnpike. Therefore, Robert E. Lee was sent to Pocahontas to put up fortifications at this place. He arrived at Valley Mountain on August 8, 1861. All histories say that his fortifications were on Valley Mountain. That in part is true for that was the pass that his troops watched, but his main camp was south of the pass through middle Mt. and the signs there today show the greatest amount of work. Lee's troops were volunteers and amateurs in the art of war. There was a lot of sickness in his camp that summer. Almost all of Lee's troops, as well as other confederate troops in the county that summer 1861 were lowlanders from the cotton country. Many of them had never seen a mountain before. That was why the mountains got them. There were very few mountain men in camp.

The Confederate forces took up all of Greenbrier Valley. They had armies at Travelers Rest (Camp Bartow) under the command of Loring. At Huntersville (Camp Northwest) at Marlinton and Top Allegheny. These troops came from all over the south. They had been rushed there owing to the fact that it soon became apparent the Virginia west of the great divide was not going to put many soldiers into the field to aid secession.

At this time Robert E. Lee was a brigadier general of the Confederate troops and was ordered to the Greenbrier Valley to take command of the units there. General Loring outranked Lee, but took orders from him.

McClellan swept every thing before him for he had railroad transportation into the center of the state, while the confederates were gathering from the south by slow marching and wagon trains over the endless mountains. By the middle of the summer, McClellan had a

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the Cheat Mountain

large army in the Tygarts Valley at Elk Water. Here that army dug one of the biggest trenches and bunkers of the war to hold the road. To keep the fort from being flanked and surprised from behind, another army had made a most elaborate fortified camp at White's Top of Cheat on the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike. This place also lent itself to easy defense. The road here passes through a gap between two beautiful hills, and the soldiers fortified both sides of the road.

The Union and Confederate forces faced each other for about two months, each waiting for the other to give battle. Finally, about the middle of September, Lee planned to attack the fortifications at Elkwater. Realizing that the pike was closed by the fortifications at White Top, the orders were that on the night of Sept. 13, (Some authorities say the 11th), the army from Camp Bartow were to climb Back Allegheny then leave the road and silently pass Whites Top through the spruce woods and to fall in behind these fortifications. A part of the army was to stay and watch the army at White Top to keep them from joining the other Union forces. The rest of the Army from Camp Bartow were to drop down into Tygarts Valley and march up stream and attack the Elkwater fortifications in the rear, while Lee marched down and attacked the front. Never was a battle better planned, and never was one worse executed, but Lee could not have known what the spruce woods on top of Cheat were like or he would not have expected an army of southerners to get through at night. Lee's camp was in hardwood territory where a man could easily walk through. But to take an army through the jungles of Cheat in the night was an unheard of project. There were dense growths of spruce something like a hundred thousand board feet to the acre. There were many windfalls that could not be seen at night. There were great patches of laurel that even a Pocahontas bear could hardly penetrate. The ground was covered with a plant called hobbleroed that made a passage both painful and difficult. Also between Back Allegheny and Cheat was a strip of boggy, swampy country so covered with spruce that the sun could hardly penetrate. To add to the horrors of these southern boys, the first snow of the winter began to fall that night, and when the men got into that dark morass through which Cheat River winds